SOME

THOUGHTS

ON

The Anomalous Malignant Meaſles, &c.

[*Price* SIX-PENCE.]

SOME

THOUGHTS

ON

The Anomalous Malignant
Measles, &c.

[Price SIX-PENCE.]

SOME

THOUGHTS

ON THE

Anomalous Malignant Meaſles,

LATELY

Peculiarly Prevalent

IN THE

Weſtern Parts of ENGLAND.

---*Utpote cum, repugnante Natura, nihil Medicina proficiat.* CELSI MEDICINA, Lib. 3, Cap. 1.

LONDON:

Printed for M. COOPER, in Pater-noſter-Row, in the Year 1760; and Sold by Mr. LEAKE at Bath; and Mr. SCORE at Exeter.

[*Price* SIX-PENCE.]

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE ANOMALOUS MALIGNANT MEASLES, &c.

I Shall make no apologies to the public, for doing what I think is my duty; and, as my primary motive to the preſent publication, is the deſire of being uſeful, ſhall be regardleſs of the laſh of Pedantic Criticiſm.

The Diagnoſtics of the ANOMALOUS MALIGNANT MEASLES, which

diſeaſe for ſome months paſt has made a melancholy carnage amongſt Children, may be ſaid to be theſe; a heavyneſs and pain in the head, a difficult reſpiration, (ſeemingly ariſing from an obſtruction ſomewhere in the Trachea) an amazingly rapid pulſe, and ſome red eruptions more or leſs, which run in irregular groups and ſplatches on the ſurface of the ſkin, and which always on their firſt appearance, at leaſt, give a degree of tranſient relief to the patient: the tongue is either white or brown, according to the greater or leſs vitiation of the humours: the urine is ſometimes high and tranſparent, at others, turbid. It not ſeldom happens, that nature having in vain made an effort to get rid of the diſeaſe by the ſkin; furiouſly impells it towards the guts; where it almoſt univerſally produces a fatal colliquative Diarrhæa.

The pulſe which in the beginning was very frequent and ſmart, towards the latter end, if the patient dies, turns languid and exceſſively quick; the difficulty of breathing ſome times much abates after the ſtate of the diſeaſe, for ſome days, 'till near the article of death; the eruptions alternately appear and diſſappear, and nature makes many unſucceſsful attempts to diſcharge the offending matter by the ſkin, but at length utterly diſappointed harraſs'd and exhauſted, yeilds to unavoidable diſſolution.

Theſe are the general ſcenes of this Tragædy, which appears very undetermind as to it's duration: in the moſt acute caſes, which have ſometimes convulſive fits for their Harbingers, it cuts the infant off the

third

third or fourth day; in its moſt ſlow advances not under fourteen or even twenty one; and then after a ſort of hectic fever, which has commenc'd from what is call'd the turn of the diſeaſe, and gradually preying on the ſtamina of life, cloſes the laſt ſcene.

It moſt frequently has attack'd Children from one to ſix years old; and of theſe, deals more gently with the leſs corpulent and ſanguine.

Before we point out any method of cure, it will be right to enquire, what is not to be done? the knowledge of which is, perhaps, a very material part of phyſical ſkill; and by theſe means we ſhall diſcover the better, what reaſonable reſources we have to fly to, after an unreaſonable treatment has been exploded.

I look upon it as a matter out of diſpute, that nature always to an unprejudic'd and ſenſible obſerver, points out the right method, for ridding herſelf of what ſhe finds noxious and diſturbing; otherwiſe we have no light to direct us, but hypotheſis, and vague conceptions, in all likelihood, mere ignis fatuus, kindled by learned pride, and blown up by precarious theory: as this is undoubtedly true, ſo 'tis granted to be equally ſo, that nature is ſometimes, too lazy and languid, at others, too rampant and outrageous in her endeavours at the expulſion of her enemy; that ſhe ſometimes goes on forming new diſeaſes, and producing ſymptoms on ſymptoms, 'till ſhe perplexes herſelf, puzzles the preſcriber, and baffles all the powers of medicine.

'Tis evident from the relief, and abatement of the fever, found to be the conſequence of the eruption, both in the ſmall pox, and the diſeaſe we are now ſpeaking to, that nature determines the morbific matter to be diſcharg'd by the cutaneous outlets: the fever rais'd in the habit, for this purpoſe, will be always ſalutary, if kept at a proper height, which is perhaps a point not eaſy to be ſettled: however, this is pretty certain, that if nature judiciouſly aſſiſted in the carrying on the fever, will not cure the diſeaſe; counteracting her, and declaring war againſt her operations, by uſing every endeavour to deſtroy her efforts, never can bring about this deſirable end: for it ſhould be carry'd along with us, that art is but at beſt her hand-

maid;

maid; and 'tis highly irrational and abſurd, when ſhe plainly diſcovers to us how ſhe intends to cure herſelf; to fly in her face, and tell her, we don't approve her method, and ſhe ſhall be free'd of her burthen by the means we think fit, or not at all:—as few aſſertions will hold univerſally, ſo this laſt of mine, may poſibly, now and then, tho' very ſeldom, be liable to objection; but I am inclin'd to think it irrefragably juſt in the inſtance before us; and therefore with an honeſt enthuſiaſm, which I believe to be founded on a rational conviction, thus expoſtulate: what, in the name of Good Sense, have we to do with repeated, continued, and perpetual evacuations, thro' the beginning, increaſe, ſtate, declenſion, and termination of this diſeaſe? what

do

do we propoſe to do, what rational aim can we have, by repeating Clyſters Laxatives and Phlebotomy, in a diſeaſe whoſe poiſon is ſo deeply rooted in the habit, ſo intimately mix'd with the fluids, ſo interwoven with their very texture, that nothing but the elaborate concoction of a ſalutary fever can perform a cure, or induce a ſanable diſpoſition?

The practiſe I have been conversant in, has convinc'd me, that in the ſmall pox, as well as in the preſent caſe, every thing goes on moſt kindly, and the diſeaſe terminates beſt, where the body has been rather inclin'd to a coſtive ſtate, than otherwiſe; and I think I have diſtinctly obſerv'd that any adventitious or procur'd laxneſs, has produced a receſ-

receſſion of the eruptions, and given the diſeaſe a bad turn: a revulſion being by this means made, from the circumference towards the center, and the matter by a ſudden inundation, oppreſſing nature at once; or elſe being invited to take its lodgment in ſome noble part, produces ulceration and a hectic, with the other conſequences:—and tho' an exceſſively high fever, ſeems to call loudly for venæſection; yet the inſtances of its bad ſucceſs in variolous caſes, I think are numerous enough, to deter us from the uſe of it, unleſs, in the moſt urgent circumſtances, and then with abundance of caution, eſpecially if on tryal we find the blood florid and lax; which I have obſerv'd to be the caſe in the diſorder here ſpoken of.—

Clyſtering repeated any further than what is ſufficient to exonerate the bowels of crudities, at the beginning of the diſeaſe, is certainly liable to the ſame objection as purging.

Bliſters undoubtedly raiſe the pulſe, and on the whole give a ſpur to the fever; but they have a tendency on their firſt application, to diſpoſe the patient to ſleep, ſo far as they do which, I think, they are of ſervice;---they likewiſe relieve the pain of the head, and may poſſibly leſſen any oppreſſion on the breaſt: but the firſt conſideration, to wit, their irritation, ought to be call'd into the account, and their number and ſize regulated accordingly.---

Declining therefore, or at leaſt being very cautious of evacuations; I have purſued with conſiderable ſucceſs, the following method:

If I am apply'd to at, or near the beginning of the diſeaſe, I enquire as uſual after the ſtate of the Child's body in regard to ſtools; and generally chooſe if I can, to give a few grains of Ipecacuanha by way of emetic:---if the Child has been coſtive for any continuance, I give a doſe of Rhubarb ſuited to its age, and as near as I can gueſs, juſt enough, to procure one, or at moſt two eccoprotic ſtools; this may be done with much ſafety, and likely with good effect.

I chooſe Rhubarb for the ſake of its leaving a coſtive diſpoſition behind

behind it; and having an eye to the acid crudities, which are frequently and generally redundant in the primæ viæ of infants; I mix with the rhubarb about double it's weight of the magnesia alba.

When the first passages are thus clear'd, I proceed to something like the subsequent formulæ, varying in respect to age, &c.

℞. Magnesiæ Albæ ℈j; pulver. e Bolo composit. gr. v; Salis Volatilis Corn. Cerv. gr. iij.; Olei Cimmam. chymic. guttulam unam; Syr. Croci q. f; M. f. Bolus sexta quaque hora sumendus in Cochleare pleno Julepi sequentis, dilutus:

℞. Aquæ Cinnamomi tenuis recentisque ℥v; Spir. Lavendulæ c. ℥ij;

Sp.

Sp. volatil. aromat. gtt. xxx; Syrupi e Meconio --- Balſamici aa ʒv; M.

To this, perhaps, a ſmall quantity of Elixir Paregoricum, might be added, not without advantage. As the dyſpnæa and cough attendant on the diſeaſe, don't appear to ariſe from a humoural infarction of the lungs, ſuch as would make the lac ammoniacum an eligible medicine, and which would contraindicate hypnotics; but rather from a local inflammation and obſtruction either in or above the lungs; I give a doſe of ſyrupus e meconio or ſome other like mild anodyne, every night: this, it appears to me, has a double good effect, not only, in moderating, without ſuppreſſing the fever; but likewiſe, in quieting the lungs, and freeing them, and the trachœa, from

the agitation of coughing, which muſt neceſſarily by increaſing the local inflammation, endanger ulcers, or a gangrene of the parts: to this end likewiſe a ſperma ceti linctus, mix'd with yolk of egg, with a portion of the diacodium, may be exhibited often, by tea ſpoonfuls.

Alſo a plaiſter or cataplaſm of theriaca andromachi, with a pretty good quantity of camphor, may be apply'd with a probability of doing ſervice: let it be ſpread on thin leather edg'd with emp: adhæſiv: big enough to envelop the neck and throat, and reach downward to the breaſt, as far as the ſuperior edge of the ſternum.

I think after the fever, thus, or in like manner regulated, has done the

the work for which NATURE intended it, 'tis right to adminiſter two or three rhabarbarate purges; and if a flaccidity and languor of ſolids require it, a decoction of the following ſort, may be us'd with advantage.

℞. Cort. p. craſs. pul. ʒſs. coq. in aquæ fontanæ ʒxxxvj, ad evaporationem tertiæ partis, colaturæ frigidæ adde. ol. cinnam : chym. (in ſpiritus vini rect. q. ſ. ſoluti), guts. v; elix. vitriol. gtt. 36; ſp. lavend. c. ʒſs. ſyr. croc. ʒijſs. M. exhibe cochlear. iij, ſeu doſin, ad Ætatem Infantis idoneam, bis, terve, de die.

This with the uſe of a clear air and proper exerciſe, will (by divine bleſſing), finiſh the cure of this troubleſome and dangerous diſeaſe:

eaſe: but before I conclude my ſhort diſſertation, I beg leave to throw in a word or two, concerning that tribe of medicines, which are call'd ANTIPUTRESCENT and ANTISEPTIC.

'Twould be a moſt deſireable thing to diſcover medicines, peculiarly and intrinſically diſpos'd to militate, and at the ſame time, efficacious to conquer the different pernicious poiſons, of which the human fluids are ſuſceptible; but here I am perſwaded, we are a great deal in the dark, perhaps more, than we generally chooſe to own.

If every ſubſtance which preſerves beef, would preſerve a living body, inclin'd to putrefy and diſ-

ſolve;

ſolve; the difficulty would be much remov'd, but daily experience evinces, that in ſpite of nitre, ſp. vitrioli, bark, and the whole poſſe of that denomination; fluids inclin'd to diſſolve will diſſolve; and the tann'd or pickled patient poſts on to the other world, as if there had been no means us'd to ſtop him.

There is ſomething in the principle of life ſo very hidden; and it at times proves it's operations ſo incompatible with our beſt philoſophy, and reaſonings; that we are oblig'd (tho' perhaps reluctantly) to give up one favourite hypotheſis after another; plain matter of fact as it were ſtaring us in the face, with the moſt cogent conviction.

Tho' reading is neceſſary to a preſcriber, yet an inflexible attachment to any, the moſt feaſible theory; or a ſelfiſh pre-poſſeſſion in favour of any ſyſtem of our own conception; render a man of the beſt parts, and the beſt learning, much leſs eligible in a ſick room, than an honeſt ſenſible old Woman, who acts purely from common ſenſe.

What led me into this train of thinking, was an opinion, that (tho' it ſeems to be clear that the diſeaſe which we have been conſidering, has a great tendency to a malignant putrid ſolution of the blood;) neither the bark, nor the neutral or acid antiſeptics, appear to be ſerviceable in it.—And I look upon the poiſon of this diſeaſe to be a

good

good deal a-kin to that of the ulcerated ſore throat, ſo very rife and fatal ſome years ſince.

What I would chiefly inculcate by this Eſſay, will perhaps be render'd more intelligible by a recapitulation.

Firſt, by all means to treat NATURE as a FRIEND, and as ſuch aſſiſt her, and deal gently with her, inſtead of declaring war againſt her operations, and oppugning her deſigns. Not to think of draining an unconcocted diſeaſe, thro' the common ſink; for as it can't poſſibly be done, the attempting it does harm.—To conſider, that while we are diminiſhing the vital fluid by phlebotomy, we are weakening nature more than the diſeaſe;

diſeaſe; to have our eye chiefly to the aſſiſting her in her intended protruſion of the enemy, through the ſkin, to which end, endeavouring to open and relax the cutaneous pores, as much as can be, by a courſe of diluters, and gentle diaphoretics.

Secondly, to be upon our guard againſt any local miſchief which may threaten us, from the inflammation about the lungs, trachæa, or elſewhere. In fine, to be cautious, PARTICULARLY CAUTIOUS, of evacuations, which may make a revulſion from the ſkin.

I have now ſaid what for the preſent occurs to me on the ſubject; and I only deſire to have my opinions treated with the ſame CANDOUR and HONEST DISPOSITION, with which I have deliver'd them.

THE END.

Poſtſcript.

It may poſſibly be obſerv'd, that at the ſame time, that I have been oppoſing the uſe of laxatives; the Magneſia alba is directed to be us'd in the Diaphoretic Bolus's: this is only on account, of it's being an agreeable alkaline ſweetener; and on a ſuppoſition, that the other ingredients would ſufficiently correct the inclination it might have, to run downward: — if 'tis thought not, ---any of the Teſtacea, may be ſubſtituted, with perhaps equal good effect.

E R R A T A.

Page 7 line 17, place an Apoſtrophe thus at undetermin'd --- page 11 line 1, *for* virational *read* irrational---page 16 line 15, *for* Olei Cimmam *read* Olei Cinnam.---page 23 line the laſt but one, after *are*, add *probably*.

Poſtſcript.

It may poſſibly be obſerv'd, that at the ſame time, that I have been oppoſing the uſe of laxatives; the Magnelia alba is directed to be us'd in the Diuphoretic Bolus's: this is only on account, of it's being an agreeable alkaline Sweetner; and on a ſuppoſition, that the other ingredients would ſufficiently correct the inclination it might have, to run downward: — if it's thought not, — any of the Teſtacea, may be ſubſtituted, with perhaps equal good effect.

E R R A T A.

Page 7 line 17. place an Apoſtrophe thus at undetermin'd — page 11 line 1, for vinal read final — page 16 line 15, for Olei Cinnamin read Olei Cinnamomi. — page 23 line the laſt but one, after are, add prov[illegible]

Caslon.

Specimen of Printing Types.

J. Tovey. London. 1766.

Removed and separately bound 7 March. 1907.

C.S.

C.44.d.14

BRITISH MUSEUM